THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

defending First Amendment rights in the comics community

NOVEMBER 1999
volume 2
#6

BUSTED!©

GIANT-SIZED CON SEASON SPECTACULAR!

ART IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER!

The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund

is a non-profit organization protecting the First Amendment rights of the comics community. Founded in 1986, the CBLDF's guiding principle is that comics deserve the same freedom of expression accorded film, literature, and other media. Thanks to generous support from comics fans and professionals alike, the CBLDF has coordinated and funded the legal defense of more than a dozen First Amendment cases.

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BUSTED!

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

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Busted! is a quarterly newsletter for those interested in preserving First Amendment rights. Our goal is to keep such individuals informed of current events and exhibitions.

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A Word from the Director

People, get ready. If the CBLDF's summer caseload is any indication, the next year is going to get very annoying very quickly.

First off, we had a West Virginia man jailed in the middle of the night for selling copies of ***Elfquest*** to some neighbor kids. The crime? Peddling obscenity to minors. Never mind that the comics in question involved childbirth, not sex, or that the birth sequences themselves had nothing to do with the mechanics of any "obscenity." Apparently, there are some things elves just don't do in West Virginia.

After a night in jail, our man had to wait more than a month to find out that he is not, in fact, a child pornographer. The case was dismissed without objection by the local D.A., which is as it should be. But why did he get arrested in the first place? Why did he have to worry that his career was in jeopardy, that at any moment the local newspaper might print these ludicrous charges before he even had a chance to answer them in court? Because his neighbor doesn't like him and doesn't like comics (or elves, I suppose), and neither the police captain who wrote up the arrest warrant nor the the local magistrate who signed it bothered to take a close look at the comic. It was enough that someone complained. Now that's annoying.

Annoyance #2: There's a tempest brewing in the Alexandrian Public Library district just outside Evansville, Indiana over ***The R. Crumb Coffee Table Art Book***, a retrospective of **Robert Crumb**'s 30 years in comics. The book, co-published by Kitchen Sink Press and Little, Brown is shelved in what the Dewey Decimal System calls the "adult comics" section, next to Waugh's *History of the Funnies* and collections of Walt Kelley's *Pogo*. A young girl checked the book out and scandalized her mother, who circulated a petition to bounce Crumb from the library. The petition led to a lot of local press and a special hearing of the library board, where a packed hall called for the book's ouster. At the very least, they wanted the book kept under lock and key in a special section of the library normally reserved for rare antiquarian books on Indiana state history.

Fortunately, one of our members alerted us to the controversy in time to do some good. We were able to provide the library some background on Crumb, including testimonials from **art spiegelman**, **Matt Groening**, *Time*'s **Robert Hughes**, and a host of other artists and critics. We sent the catalogue of a show at the New York Museum of Modern Art which placed Crumb among the greatest cartoonists of all time and one of the most important artists of the second half of this century. We even sent positive reviews the *Art Book* had received from *Publisher's Weekly*, *Booklist*, and other trade publications that help guide librarians in expanding their collections. We also got in touch with the American Library Association and the Indiana Civil Liberties Union to lend additional support.

In the end, the Alexandrian Public Library board elected to stand by their staff and keep the book right where it was, although they have taken measures to inform patrons where the children's section is and how the Dewey Decimal System is organized. A lot of work just to stand still, but when comics are involved we've come to expect that.

Finally, we have the State of Virginia's newly-amended harmful to minors statute, which adds the words "or electronic files of any form" to the list of proscribed media which can not be transmitted to children. Ostensibly designed to keep pedophiles from sending pornographic clips to children, it has the added bonus of criminalizing huge sections of the World Wide Web. The CBLDF's history is a litany of misapplied harmful to minor cases and the Internet is an important part of how comics are displayed and marketed these days. So we joined with People for the American Way, the ALA, the American Bookseller's Foundation for Free Expression, and 11 other plaintiffs (including **Harlan Ellison** and **Neil Gaiman**) in a lawsuit to keep the net open to material that is not designed for children.

What makes this case especially annoying is that two recent laws passed by Congress restricting material on the Internet, along with similar statutes in Michigan, New York, and New Mexico, have all been thrown out in court. Before the legislation was introduced, the Supreme Court had already held that the Internet is an important marketplace of ideas deserving the broadest possible First Amendment protection, and yet the Virginia legislature passed it anyway. Even the objections of their own governor and attorney general did not deter them; activists just attached it to an indispensible bill. Never mind that Virginia styles itself the "Home of the Internet"—a slogan that will appear on VA license plates next year! We have to sue to keep the web unfettered in the Dominion State. It would almost be funny if the stakes weren't so high.

What is it that makes free speech such an easy target? A new survey by the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center finds that "Americans appreciate, understand, and endorse First Amendment principles, but become wary and occasionally even hostile when it comes to the practices." Since it was first conducted in 1997, *The State of the First Amendment* identifies "a series of negative shifts in attitudes toward First Amendment freedoms."

(continued on page 11)

ELFQUEST: BUSTED IN WEST VIRGINIA

A 36-year-old West Virginia social worker was awakened at 12:30 a.m. on July 13, 1999 by a pounding on his door. Outside, police officers were waiting to take him into custody. The charge: selling a copy of ***Elfquest*** to a minor.

Earlier that day the man had been removing comic books from the trunk of his car some days after attending a flea market. He was approached by three neighborhood boys, two eight years old, and one age eleven. They were interested in the collection, and the man sold each child an issue of *Elfquest: New Blood* for a quarter.

One of the eight-year-olds came back that evening to return the comic, explaining that his mother did not want him to keep it. The man refunded the boy's quarter. Their conversation was overheard by the man's next-door neighbor, the grandfather of the other eight-year-old boy. Apparently offended by unspecified scenes in the comic, the grandfather called the man "a pervert" and accused him of selling smut to children.

Following a verbal altercation between the two men, the grandfather reported the incident to the police. That night, police obtained authorization from the local magistrate for the comic collector's immediate arrest on charges of distributing obscene materials to a minor. A few hours later, he was behind bars in the local jail.

The comic collector was released the next morning on a $5,000 bond. His attorney requested a jury trial and the hearing was set for mid-August, but later postponed until September 2. In West Virginia, the charge of "knowingly distributing obscene materials to a minor" carries a sentence of up to one year in jail and/or a $1,000 fine, in addition to associated court and legal fees.

At right is the "offending" scene from the comic, 1993's *Elfquest: New Blood* #6. Published by **WaRP Graphics**, *Elfquest* is a long-running fantasy series created by the husband and wife team of **Richard** and **Wendy Pini**. It's an award-winning series that is often recommended for younger readers.

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME -- THE CUP'S ABOUT TO MAKE ITS ENTRANCE.
GOOD. GOOD!
THE WORK WAS A LOT EASIER WHEN--
UNGH
--WE WERE PLANTING THE SEED!
GO AHEAD AND PANT IF YOU FEEL LIKE IT.

This birth scene from* Elfquest: New Blood *#6 was considered grounds for arrest on charges of selling obscene materials to a minor.

"This is what the Fund is all about," said CBLDF Executive Director **Chris Oarr**. "If you wanted an object lesson in why we exist, you couldn't ask for a better—or worse—example."

Throughout the case, the CBLDF maintained the defendant's anonymity in the hopes that the charges would be both dismissed and suppressed at the preliminary hearing. "Our defendant is a substance-abuse counselor in a small town who sometimes works with adolescents," explained Oarr. "Even if he wins the case, this kind of publicity would be ruinous for his career if it got out. The charge of obscenity carries a huge public stigma, whether the charges are well-founded or not."

"I'm really glad my local comics retailer suggested I contact the CBLDF," said the defendant. "From talking with the Fund and with other comics fans and retailers, I feel like everyone's rooting for me. We're not a bunch of pornographers in trenchcoats. We're a responsible, well-educated community, and we can pull together to protect our rights."

Eventually, the charges were dismissed at the preliminary hearing. The material in question fails the common Miller test of obscenity on all counts: there is no lewd exposure of genitalia, no appeal to prurient interest, and the work as a whole clearly has artistic and literary merit. Moreover, the comic does not fulfill the standards of West

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CBLDF MEMB

IVAN BRUNETTI
Member No. 1999-0451

The creator of the disturbingly funny series ***Schizo*** from Fantagraphics, Ivan Brunetti ranks as one of our most notorious supporters. Signing for the Fund in San Diego in 1998, Ivan created the infamous "Gimme the Punchline, I'll Draw the Cartoon" fundraiser. Despite the deleterious effects this had on his health, Ivan returned to sign again in 1999. He also contributed this issue's cover.

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Maxine Brown
Scott Brown
Winfield Brown
Charles Brownstein
Joel Brunette
Ivan Brunetti
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Jana Buehl
Charles Burns
Nick Burns
Dal Bush
Rebecca Bushong-Taylor
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Kurt Busiek
Sydney Busiek
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"THE CHICAGO CREW"
Tim Gagne, Steve Harold, Jeff Lorenz, and Rich Marsalek

A Chicago con wouldn't be a convention without the appearance of our Second City crew. These guys have been volunteering for years, not just at Wizard World, but at Motor City, San Diego, and more. They're our Number 1 volunteer crew, and you can count on them to run a good booth that's a lot of fun to visit. Look for them at a con near you!

CBLDF Me

After launching the CBLDF Member Drive in April, it took just six months to reach our initial goal of 1,000 new members. This is a good indication of just how strongly the comics community values freedom of expression. I want to thank each one of the people listed here for standing up for the rights of artists to create, publishers to publish, stores to sell, and readers to read the comics that they enjoy. I'm sure that your example will help us expand our rolls to 5,000 by the end of next year. People expect comics to roll over and play dead at the first sign of controversy, but that doesn't have to happen. There's strength in numbers, and with a strong Fund we don't have to roll over for anybody.

Frank Miller, Member Drive Chairman

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mber Drive

Comics fans and professionals can now become card-carrying Members of the Fund and help protect the industry's rights. The annual membership fee is only $25, and every dollar goes straight to the CBLDF's War Chest for future cases. All members will receive a Membership Card, your ticket to Members Only events across the country. You can join us by filling out the order form on the last page of this issue, on-line at www.cbldf.org, or by calling 1-800-99-CBLDF.

This list comprises all members enrolled prior to September 30th, 1999. With this issue of *Busted!* we've begun a series of Member Profiles to focus on those who have stood up to be counted in favor of the First Amendment. Keep an eye on this space for more member profiles in future newsletters!

TONY ISABELLA
Member No. 1999-0163

A regular columnist for ***Comics Buyer's Guide,*** Tony Isabella has been a constant friend of the Fund for years. His insightful articles for the industry's weekly trade magazine touch on every aspect of comics. And he's always ready to turn a critical spotlight on comics censorship, be it in his coverage of the *Elfquest* bust or in his recent articles on the Comics Code.

SEAN JORDAN
Member No. 1999-0272

Sean Jordan is the creator of **ZENtertainment**, the Internet's leading entertainment newsletter. Sean distills the latest news in comics, music, movies, TV, and more into quick reads. ZENtertainment recently took the prize in ONElist's "Grow to Give" program as the e-mail service's fastest growing community. Sean chose the CBLDF as the recipient of the contest's **$5,000** prize.

CBLDF MEMBER

JIM MAHFOOD
Member No. 1999-0016

The ultra-hip artist for such slacker classics as ***Clerks*** and the ***Generation X Underground Special,*** Jim Mahfood's own ***Grrl Scouts*** is in full effect from Oni Press. Jim is always down to sign for the Fund at conventions, and he was one of the very first to sign up for our Membership Program in April. One week after the Program was announced in *Busted!* #4, we had Jim's dues in hand!

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David Reid
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ERIC REYNOLDS
Member No. 1999-0204

Eric Reynolds is Marketing Director for Fantagraphics Books, Inc. and has more than once used his marketing savvy on the Fund's behalf. He organized the Seattle stop on Neil Gaiman's 1998 Guardian Angel Tour, an evening of stories, art, and music which took the city's award for Best Club Event of '98. In addition, Eric has spread the good word by signing up a number of artists and FBI staff.

S 1100 STRONG!

Michael Reid
Daniel Reilly
Anthony Reimo
Sherisse Rena
John Reskusich
Eric Reynolds
Matt Rice
Mike Rice
Jamie Rich
Adam Richards
Jon Richardson
Mike Richardson
Jerry Riddle
Matt Ridenour
Elayne Riggs
Robin Riggs
James Riley
Peter Riley
Beth Hannan Rimmels
Michael Ring
Daniel Ripoll
Bill Ritter
Daniel Robb
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Primitivo Rodriguez
Paul Roinick
Betsy Roll
Rory Root
Matt Rosenthal
Alex Ross
Ann Ross
Brian Ross
Adrienne Rowe
Fern Rucci
Peter Rucci
Greg Rucka
Michael Rushing
Brady Russell
Richard Russell
Jim Ryan
Joe Ryan
Maria Ryan
Mark Ryan
Nathan Ryan
Owen Ryan
Joseph P. Rybandt
Peggy Rynearson
Tim Sale
Samuel Jose Salinas
Rob Salkowitz
Darren Sanchez
Lloyd Sanchez
Vinnie Sanchez
Jennifer Santopietro
Scott Saternye
Matt Saunders
Hyrum Savage
Buddy Scalera
Chris Schaff
Bill Schanes
Al Schatz
Rick Scheckman
Dan Scheidegger
Denise Scheidegger
Kyle Scheidegger
Patricia Scheidegger
Warren Scherffius
Mike Schimmel
Paul Schiraldi
Michelle Schlachta
Evan Schmalz
Kurt Schmidt
Mike Schmidt
Matthew Schnaare
Bob Schreck
Sandy Schreiber
Diana M. Schutz
Alex Schvartzman
Matt Schwartz
David Scott
Geoffrey Scott
Jeffrey Scott
Robert Scott
Todd Scott
John Scranton
David Scroggy
Hayden Sears
Eric Seffinga
David Lee Seidman
Casey Seijas
Stephen Seitz
Steven Seller
Matthew Senreich
David Setlik
Jim Shackett
Chris Shadoian
Michael Shah
Gareb Shamus
Ian Shamus
Lisa Shamus
Martin Shamus
Stephen Shamus
Susan Shamus
Jeff Sharpe
Joe Sharpnack
Michael K. Sheeter
Michael D. Sheffield
Andre Shell
Neal Sherry
David Shields
Mike Shiley
Stan Shiley
Paul Shiple
Robert Shooks
Steven Shubert
Craig Shutt
Mary Kay Shutt
Arthur Silbert
Albert Silva Jr.
Dave Sim
James Simants
Dina Simmons
Steven Sindel
Michael Skidmore
Johnny Skosnik
Scott Slemmons
Mary Ann Smania
Jeremy Smith
Kevin Smith
Louise Smith
Mark Smith
Noah Smith
Simeon Smith
Tom Smith
Chris Smits
Doug Snow
Arlene So
Jason Sobol
Jacob Sofer
Daniel Souder
Steven Souza
Rick Spears
Melvin Spicer
art spiegelman
Shawn Spurlock
Malanie Stagman
Daniel Stagner
Algis Stankus-Saulaitis
Chris Staros
Peter Stathis
Joyce Steel
Jeff Stoltman
Al Stoltz
Frank Stone
Joshua Stone
Tom Stormonth
Steve Stoughton
Randy Stradley
Jerold Stratton
Stewart Stremler
Michael Stroud
James Stubbs
Paul Sudlow
Sheron Summers
F.J. Sutton
Lorrie Sutton
Brent Swanson
Preston Sweet
Andrew Switzky
Lorna Sykes
Jeanette Taggart-Sanchez
Vince Tannahill
Erin Tapken
Omar Tartini
Scott Tate
Frank Taylor
Greg Taylor
Michael Teague
Jayne Tear
Mike Tennyson
Chuck Terceira
Anne Thalheimer
Benjamin Thall
Martha Thomases
Jake Thompson
Maggie Thompson
Brian Thomsen
Stefan Thomsen
Joshua J. Thomson
Kyle Thorne
Kelli Thorniley
Sean Thorniley
Gerald Tichy
Michael Tierney
Sean Tierney
Michael Toft
Kari Tommeraasen
Matt Traynham
David Tremonti
Jeff Trexler

LOUIS VALENTI & JEFFREY BENNETT
Member Nos. 1999-0001 & 0002

Louis Valenti has the honorable distinction of being the Fund's first member—ever! He signed up in April at I-CON, a sci-fi and fantasy show on Long Island. He approached the booth with his good friend Jeffrey Bennett, but at the mere mention of CBLDF Membership he leapt to the front of the line and secured his place in comics history. Jeffrey Bennett remains Member No. 2.

Nancy Trueblood
Dal Turley
Ron Turner
Gary Tyrrell
Jan Utstein-O'Neill
Louis A. Valenti
Trevor Valle
Don Van Horn
Jen van Meter
Lynn Varley
Vin Varvara
Tim Veatch
Malvin Velez
E.H. Verstegen
June Vigil-Storm
Annabelle Villanueva
Brandon Vogel
S. Layla Voll
James Scott Wade
Matt Wagner
Mark Waid
Joseph Walerko
James Walker
Gregory Wallace
James Wallace
Jean Ellen Wallace
Jennifer Wallace
Donald Walsh
Patrick Ward
Chris Warner
Sam Weber
Shawn Wedding
Joellyn Weingourt
Steven Weissman
Douglas Weisz
Christopher Weithers
Stephen M. Welch
Sam Weller
Mark Wentworth
Joel West
Annie Wheeler
Bob White
Joni White
Rich White
Chris Wike
Scott Willems
Jason Williams
Jim Williams
Richard Willis
John C. Willis IV
David E. Wills
Sonia Wincott
Barry Windsor-Smith
Brian Winger
Trevor Witkop
Donald Wolanin
Gene Wolfe
Lawrence Wolfe
Stephanie Wolfe
Words & Pictures
Christopher Wood
Randy Wood
Scott Alan Woodard
Troy Woods
David Wright
Frank Wright
Fred Wright
Edmund Wu
John H. Wycough
Joe Yanarella
Natalie Yarbrough
Kelly Yeates
Tracey Yen
Tim Yeoman
David Yim
Jamie York
Brian Young
John Young
Rich Young
Connie Zastoupil
Robert Zebrowski, DMD
Michael Zeno

CHRIS WEITHERS & SHAWN SPURLOCK
Member Nos. 1999-0530 & 0093

Chris Weithers and Shawn Spurlock of Graham Cracker Comics made Wizard World a surprising show for the Fund. At the Chicago-area location where they work, Chris and Shawn raised some serious money for the CBLDF. They presented a hefty check to Frank Miller at our Members' Reception. Special thanks go to head honcho Jamie Graham for making it all possible.

You Are Cordially Invited

Neil Gaiman Will Eisner Kurt Busiek P. Craig Russe
Neal Adams Jeff Smith Adrian Tomine Ja

for the comics event of the new

Why a cruise?
More and more magazines and non-profit organizations are organizing celebrity fund-raising cruises; combining decadence with a passion for free speech and comics is a natural.

What kind of comics programming will there be?
All the guests have agreed to participate in programming. For example, Kurt Busiek will give writer's workshops, and Jules Feiffer will give slide shows. There will be Q&A sessions and panels. There will be plenty of programming.

How accessible will the creators be?
You can't follow them into the bathroom, but otherwise they'll be damned accessible. You'll be able to sign up for dinners with your favorite creators. They'll undoubtedly hang out at the bars, on the deck, and in conversation pits. We want to create a nice, informal atmosphere where we can all talk to each other.

Will Neil Gaiman sign my* Sandman *books?
Do you think Neil Gaiman has nothing better to do than waste his valuable time signing your *Sandman* books? You'll be lucky if he gives you the time of day. And don't even think about touching his leather jacket!

Of course you can get books signed! Bring all the *Sandman*, *Spirit*, and *Love & Rockets* you can carry. Who knows, if you bring a sketchbook, you may even come away with some nice drawings.

Are the creators going to be as smart-alecky as that answer?
Only Gary Groth, whose writing this and needs to vent a little to keep it interesting. Everyone else will be disgustingly polite and well-behaved. Even garrulous. Especially Neil.

What do the different price levels signify?
The ship has nine —count 'em, nine— deck levels. The more money you spend, the higher the level you occupy. Just like life. All the rooms are reasonably spacious. When you get to categories 11 and 12, you're talking about larger cabins and private verandahs.

What does the ticket price incl
Every damned thing you could w
excursions, and personal expendit
whole tip for the trip.

When I'm not hanging out
Hernandez or Will Eisner, wha
When you're not lying around the po
take in Vegas-style shows, go swimmi
ble, and eat like three horses.

What's there to do at the three
Why, do you think you'll be bored? Th
(in addition to just wandering aroun
at great restaurants): sightseeing, fi
etc. These can all be arranged onboa

If I'm coming alone, will a cabi
does that work?
You can book a cabin alone (paying
in which case they will do their best
preference, age, etc. It could be wors
mate. Many cabins, normally reserv
and 4th passenger; this is how we ar

Do I need shots? Passport?
No shots, but, yes, you'll need your p

Is the ship kid friendly?
Very. They have a camp for various a

I've never been on a cruise but I t
for doddering old retirees who th
Evidently not. All the brochures featu
athletic, good-looking, smiling, hap
home. We know our guests will be.

The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund

Making Way

Not to mention the fabulous Pre-Cru

to Join...

ell Matt Wagner Mark Waid Dan Clowes Brian Pulido Frank Miller
aime Hernandez Gilbert Hernandez *and* **Jules Feiffer**

millenium

de?
ant except booze, soft drinks, shore
res at the mall. It even includes your

with Frank Miller or Gilbert
t can I do?
ool and drinking, you can watch movies,
ing, jog on the track, get a massage, gam-

ports of call?
here are many shore excursions available
d, taking in the local culture, and eating
shing, scuba-diving, snorkeling, sailing,
rd at the Shore Excursion desk.

n or mates be assigned to me? How

the single rate) or book as a single share
to match you according to sex, smoking
e: we could give you Joe Matt as a room-
ed for families, can accommodate a 3rd
rived at a low "Starving Artist" rate.

passport. Mexico is a different country.

ages of children.

hought they were cheesy excursions
ink Perry Como is the cat's pajamas.
re pictures of hip, young, tanned, toned,
py yuppies. We think you'll be quite at

Making Waves
The CBLDF Fundraising Cruise

To book a reservation or ask cruise-specific questions, call our friends at The Cruise Authority at 1-800-448-1830.

For comics-only questions, you may call the CBLDF at 1-800-992-2533 or The Comics Journal at 1-800-657-1100.

Sponsored by The Comics Journal, NBM Publishing, Drawn & Quarterly, Dark Horse Comics, Diamond Comic Distributors, NextPlanetOver.com, and WonderCon.

April 9-16, 2000

April 9-16, 2000

es Cruise

ise Launch Party at WonderCon!

Jules Feiffer's prophetic cartoon was actually drawn nearly 20 years ago and is copyright © 1999 Jules Feiffer

GUARDIAN ANGEL TOUR 1999

Acclaimed comics and fantasy author **Neil Gaiman** hit the road once more this fall on the **1999 Guardian Angel Tour.** Best known in comics as the author of DC's ***Sandman,*** Gaiman has also written two best-selling novels and numerous short stories and graphic novels. The Guardian Angel Tours present Gaiman giving dramatic readings from his fiction and poetry in intimate art theatres across the country.

These tours are part of Gaiman's on-going commitment to raise money for the CBLDF. The three previous Guardian Angel Tours generated more than **$60,000** for the Fund. The 1999 tour, with stops in the Washington, D.C. and Boston areas, raised an additional **$15,000.**

On the fall tour, Gaiman treated audiences to stories from his collections *Angels and Visitations* and *Smoke and Mirrors,* along with a number of poems. He also tried out a few new works, including an as-yet unpublished children's story called *The Wolves in the Walls,* to be illustrated **Dave McKean.** In addition, the readings gave fans a preview of the first chapter of the long-awaited ***Sandman: The Dream Hunters.*** Coming this fall from DC, *Dream Hunters* is the first new Sandman story since Gaiman wrapped up the series in 1993. (See page 15 for the exclusive signed CBLDF edition.)

The 1999 Guardian Angel Tour really began with a pre-tour appearance by Gaiman at **The Expo: SPX '99** in Bethesda, Maryland on September 18 (see the Con Report on page 13 for all the details). Gaiman signed at the CBLDF booth, meeting fans, posing for photos, and even doing quick sketches, helping us raise almost **$800** in two hours.

September 21 was the first official date on the tour, bringing Gaiman to the **Bethesda Theatre Café.** Just over a mile from the nation's capital, the Café is a fully-renovated art-deco theatre from the fifties with nightclub-style seating. The theatre also hosted a private reception with Gaiman before the reading, open to CBLDF Members and Premium Ticket holders. The reception's relaxed, cocktail party atmosphere gave fans the chance to chat with Gaiman and each other. After a reading at which the audience sat captivated, Gaiman took time to answer questions. With wit and sometimes surprising candor, Gaiman fielded queries on topics ranging from his inspirations and early days in the business to his recent work on the English-language script for the anime film ***Princess Mononoke.***

Support for the event came from a number of local comics retailers who helped promote the reading and sold tickets. Thanks go to **Big Planet Comics** of Maryland and Virginia, **Beyond Comics, Closet of Comics,** and **Comics, Cards & Collectibles** for all their assistance.

The tour moved north on September 23 to Cambridge, Massachusetts, just outside Boston. The **Brattle Theatre** on historic Harvard Square hosted a full day of Guardian Angel events. The program got underway with the U.S. theatrical premiere of ***Neverwhere,*** the acclaimed fantasy television series which Gaiman created for the BBC. The author introduced the screening, which gave fans a rare opportunity to see the three-hour series on the big screen.

Once again, the reading itself was preceded by a private reception with Gaiman. Just around the corner from the Brattle, the John Harvard Brew Pub hosted an intimate gathering for CBLDF Members and premium ticket holders. Back at the Brattle, CBLDF Executive Director **Chris Oarr** spoke about the tour's purpose and recent censorship cases before introducing Gaiman to a packed house. After nearly two hours of reading, Gaiman took a brief intermission before returning to answer questions from the audience.

The evening concluded with a powerful reading of "Snow, Glass, Apples," a disturbing retelling of *Snow White* that's definitely *not* for children. This came at Chris Oarr's request; the previous day, he and Gaiman had discussed the story at a meeting with members of **People for the American Way,** the **American Booksellers' Foundation for Free Expression,** the **Freedom to Read Foundation,** and other First Amendment organizations. The CBLDF is joining these groups in a suit seeking to block new on-line censorship legislation in Virginia. Under this new law, the on-line publication of "Snow, Glass, Apples" (such as at **www.bibliobytes.com**) would be a criminal act. Turn to page 14 for more details on this emerging suit.

The success of the Cambridge Guardian Angel Tour stop is due in no small part to **Tony Davis** of **Million Year Picnic** for his help in booking and organizing the events, and to the Million Year staff for volunteering their time and selling loads of tickets. Tickets were also available at **Comicopia** and **That's Entertainment,** who leant support to the event. Thanks go out to **Dream Haven Books,** volunteers Katy Garnier, Eric Griffith, Ezra Friedman, Rebecca, and the entire staff of the Brattle.

Be sure to watch our web-site at **www.cbldf.org** and future issues of *Busted!* for information on Neil Gaiman's next Guardian Angel Tour, going coast-to-coast in the year 2000.

CBLDF ON-LINE AUCTION NETS $11,000

NextPlanetOver.com, one of the nation's premiere on-line comics retailers, organized a massive **On-Line Auction** to benefit the CBLDF. The auction ran the second week of September on **eBay**, the electronic epicenter of collectibles trading. With more than 75 items in all, the auction included original artwork, signed prints, posters, and comics, rare collectibles, toys, and much more.

The centerpiece of the auction was an original painting by **Joseph Michael Linsner**, creator of *Dawn*. Linsner produced the piece as the cover of the CBLDF benefit book *Independent Voices* #2 (see below). The auction is the first time that Linsner has ever allowed any of his published cover art to be sold. "I believe absolutely in free speech," said Linsner, "and I'm very excited to be able to support the cause and the CBLDF."

"This was a very special occasion," said CBLDF executive director Chris Oarr. "Joe's been a long-time supporter of the Fund, and I'm grateful that he took the lead in making such a major commitment to this auction." The winning bidder for the Linsner painting donated **$4,040.**

Other notable items on the block included a cabin aboard **Making Waves**, the CBLDF Cruise (see page 8 for details); a *Sin City* Survival Kit hand-assembled by **Frank Miller**; and a complete collection of CBLDF signs from the San Diego Comic-Con, signed by all the artists who appeared at our booth. The auction also featured an impressive array of original artwork, including pieces donated by **Will Eisner**, **Adam Kubert**, **Todd McFarlane**, and **Angel Medina**, as well as original pages by **Jack Kirby**, **Leinil Francis Yu**, **Joe Madureira**, **Jimmy Palmiotti**, and many more.

Participants in the auction represented most of the 50 states, and several other countries as well. Altogether, the auction raised almost **$11,000** to support free expression in comics. In terms of number of participants, range of items, and results, this auction was the largest and most successful ever undertaken on the Fund's behalf.

"It was a pleasure to be able to work with NextPlanetOver.com," said Oarr. "They really took the initiative in organizing this auction, from putting together the items to putting the pages up on-line. The Internet is a vital component of the comics industry, and NextPlanetOver.com is an increasingly important part of that. It says a lot about them that, virtually since the company was founded, they've been looking for ways to support the Fund."

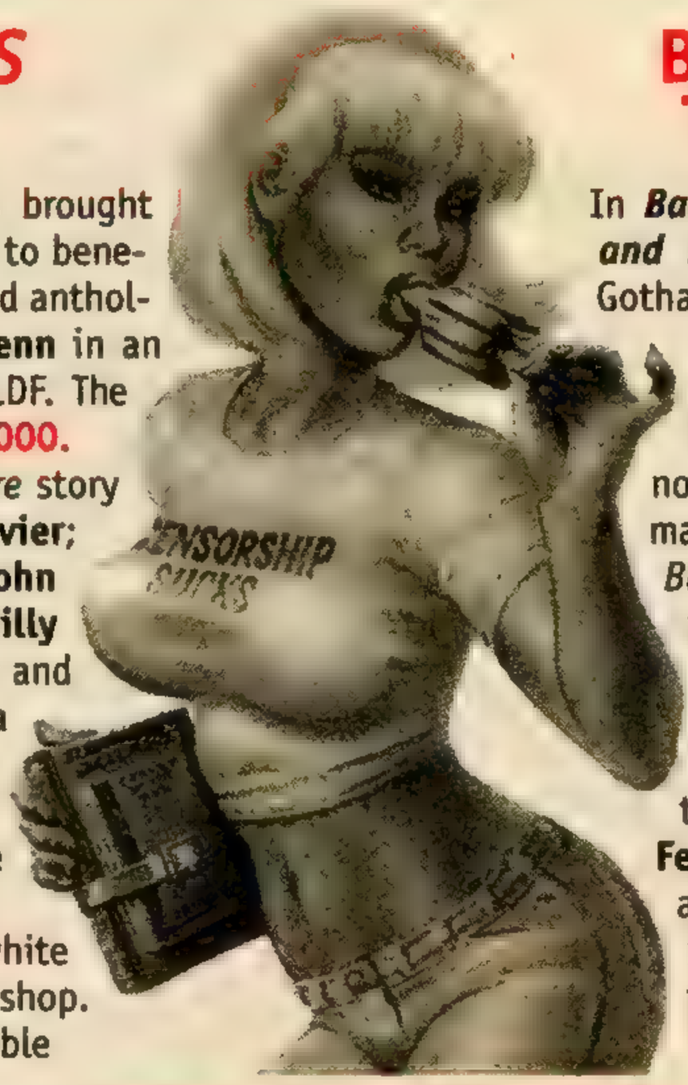
The CBLDF would like to thank everyone who donated their time, art, and money to make this auction such a success. Special thanks go out to NextPlanetOver.com's **Dave Reid**, **Matt Schwartz**, and **Dave Scott**, and also to CBLDF Member **Tim Chin** for his generous donations.

INDEPENDENT VOICES JOIN TOGETHER

Once again, **Peregrine Entertainment** has brought together a collection of up-and-coming creators to benefit the Fund. ***Independent Voices* #2** is the second anthology compiled by **David Napoliello** and **Rich Henn** in an effort to raise funds and awareness for the CBLDF. The first volume of *Independent Voices* raised over **$1,000.**

This year's issue features a new *Books of Lore* story by Napoliello, **Kevin Tucker**, and **Philip Xavier**; "Dream Angel Pandora" by **Vince Sneed** and **John Peters**; the uproarious "Kickass Girl" by **Billy Martinez**; a *Buzzboy* story from John Gallagher; and much more. All this new material is wrapped in a beautiful cover by **Joseph Michael Linsner** (*Dawn*), who donated the original to the Fund for our On-Line Auction. This provocative image will also be coming soon to a t-shirt near you!

Independent Voices #2, a 48-page black & white comic, is now available from your local comic shop. Both the comic and the t-shirt are also available directly from the Fund (see page 15).



ARTWORK BY JOSEPH MICHAEL LINSNER

BATMAN: FIGHTING FOR THE FIRST AMENDMENT

In ***Batman Masterpieces: Portraits of the Dark Knight and His World***, the Caped Crusader fights to protect Gotham City from the Joker and a gang of super-villains. Now, thanks to **Watson-Guptill Publications**, the Dark Knight is also fighting the evils of censorship.

Watson-Guptill, a leading publisher of illustrated non-fiction books, recently announced that it will make a donation to the CBLDF for every copy of *Batman Masterpieces* sold in the comics market through December 31, 1999.

Originally published in 1996 as a trading card series, the book collects **Doug Moench**'s story of the Joker's search for Batman's killer. The book features full-color paintings by **Carl Critchlow**, **Duncan Fegredo**, **Scott Hampton**, and **Dermot Power**, as well as production sketches and all the artwork from the rare "chase cards." *Batman Masterpieces* is available through your local retailer (ISBN 0-8230-0461-9); Diamond Order Number STAR08283; or through this issue of *Busted!* (page 15).

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR *(continued from page 2)*

The survey's authors conclude that "the First Amendment is in trouble, given the nature of the pressures and panics confronting Americans today and the apparent willingness of lawmakers to challenge constitutional freedoms."

That pressure is only likely to increase over the coming year, as the national election cycle hits fever pitch. Politicians at all levels are rewarded for offering simple solutions to complex social problems, and "the media" is a convenient catch-all. Comics' role will be local and predictably small. Hollywood films and video games will dominate the national stage, while comics controversies pop up here and there across the country. It's all a big yawn, except for the people whose lives get caught up in it.

There is some good news, however. This summer has put the Fund in a stronger position than ever to fight the censors where they live. As you will read in these pages, the summer convention season broke all sorts of fundraising records. **Neil Gaiman** hit the road once again for a very successful **Guardian Angel Tour**, and the **Member Drive** has already reached its first-year goal of 1,000. We're well on our way to signing up 5,000 members by the end of 2000, which will not only help our financial stability but also our standing in cases like the suit against Virginia. The more members of the comics community that become directly involved with the CBLDF, the more effective we can be in standing up for comics.

We have a lot to look forward to in the new year, including our biggest, boldest, most-fun fundraiser ever: **Making Waves**, the CBLDF cruise. You can read all about it in our center spread, but just knowing that **Neil Gaiman**, **Frank Miller**, **Will Eisner**, **Jules Feiffer**, **Neal Adams**, and a dozen other comics legends are on board for this thing should be enough to capture your interest. While the cruise embarks April 9th, the fun begins with an Aloha Party over WonderCon weekend April 7th in Oakland, California. From WonderCon, you can hop on a puddle jumper down to Los Angeles to meet the ship and set sail for the Mexican Riviera. This is an opportunity to experience a one-of-a-kind vacation with your favorite comics creators while helping out the Fund. Who says you can't do well by doing good?

Chris Oarr, Executive Director

CONVENTION

FRANK MILLER SIGNS A LIMITED *300* PRINT

Thanks to the support of convention organizers, creators, publishers, and volunteers, the 1999 summer con season was without a doubt the most successful in the history of the CBLDF. We're pleased to announce that new fund-raising records were set at Wizard World, Comic-Con International, and The Expo: SPX 99.

The season got underway with **Wizard World** (July 16-18) in Chicago. Organized with military precision, this was an extraordinary show for the Fund. Genial **George Perez**, the acclaimed artist for *The Avengers*, was the star of the show. He appeared at the CBLDF booth all day every day, signing autographs and turning out sketches. Colorist **Tom Smith** added color to his work as fans lined-up and looked on. *Avengers* scribe **Kurt Busiek** rounded out the team, dropping by for some marathon signing sessions. These assembled **Avengers** raised $3,500 for the Fund.

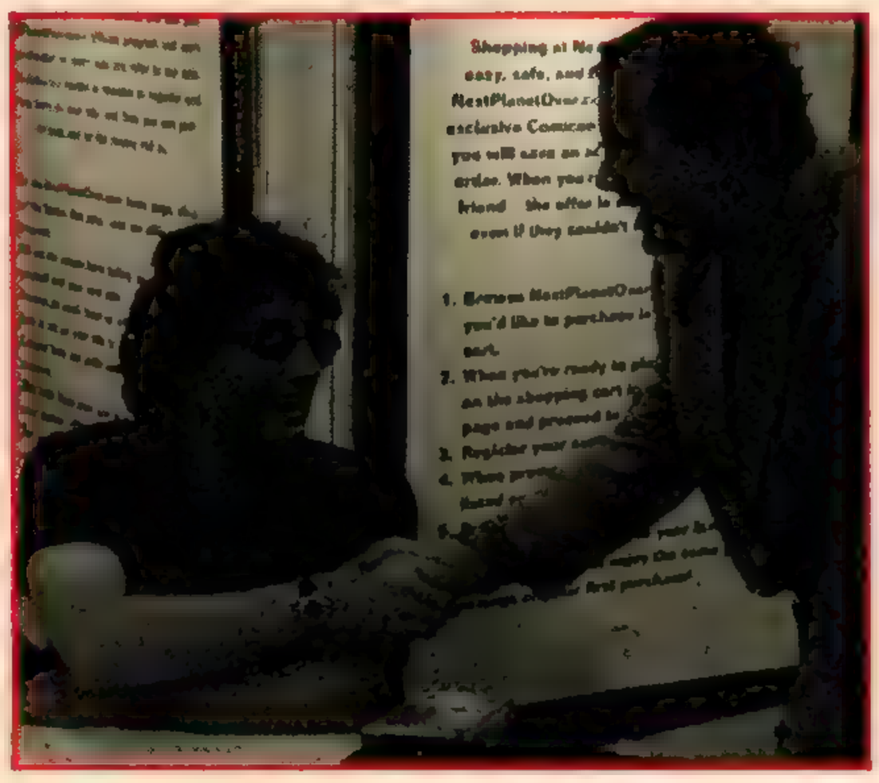
Wizard World also marked a rare con appearance by CBLDF Board Member **Frank Miller**, better known to fans for his ground-breaking work on *Sin City* and the epic *300*. Miller's only public signing at the show was held as a special CBLDF benefit at the **Dark Horse Comics** booth. Miller was joined by his wife and colorist **Lynn Varley**, while CBLDF director **Chris Oarr** and Dark Horse's **Michael Martens** entertained the huge crowd with a show of *Sin City* schwag.

On Saturday, Miller hosted a private CBLDF Signing Party. 100 lucky bastards were chosen at random to attend from the audience at Miller and Varley's morning panel. These fans got the chance to spend a bit more time with Miller, getting stuff signed and snapping photos without having to stand in line. The comedy duo of Martens and Oarr kept the crowd entertained with *Sin City* trivia and auctions of rare Miller prints, statues, and collectibles. This event, the first of its kind, was sponsored by **Jim Mortensen** and **Comix Revolution**. Together, Miller and Varley raised $2,000 at the show.

Wizard World was also the scene of our inaugural **CBLDF Members' Reception**, hosted by Miller, our 1999 Membership Chairman. Luminaries from all corners of the industry turned out to meet and greet fellow CBLDF Members at this private cocktail party sponsored by **Dark Horse Comics**. At the event, **Chris Weithers** and **Shawn Spurlock** of Graham Cracker Comics presented Miller with a check for $2,200 raised at their store.

But the evening's revels had just begun as fans moved across the hall to the annual **Chaos! Comics Auction Party**. 1999 Defender of Liberty Award-winner **Brian Pulido** auctioned off original Chaos! artwork and rare collectibles, raising more than $3,000 to benefit the Fund. With his auctioneering skills on full display, Pulido even got bids on a signed box of Rice-A-Roni! The party continued after the auction 'til well past the witching hour. Thanks go to **Francisca Pulido** for organizing the event.

Altogether, the Fund raised a record-breaking $17,800 at Wizard World, nearly tripling last year's contributions at the show, and signed up 125 new members. We couldn't have done it without our crack crew of volunteers: Steve Harold, Tim Gagne, Jeff Lorenz, Rich Marsalek, B.J. Kvitko, Shane Heckethorn, and Mike Brandfellner. Special thanks go out to **Steve Shamus** and the Wizard World staff for all their attention and support.



NEIL GAIMAN & CHRIS OARR AT NEXTPLANETOVER.COM

But the biggest show of the summer was still to come: **Comic-Con International** in San Diego, hosting a full week of comics events from August 10 -15. The country's largest gathering of comics fans and professionals welcomed the Fund with open arms for a show that broke all previous convention records.

The Fund fun began early with a CBLDF Signing Party hosted by **Frank Miller**. Once again, 100 lucky bastards were chosen at random during Miller's morning panel for the chance to meet the artist and beat the lines. **Dark Horse** pitched in with some warm bodies and cool *Sin City* stuff to get the party started right. Meanwhile, Comic-Con guest of honor **Neil Gaiman** made an appearance at **NextPlanetOver.com** in a special benefit for the Fund. Back at the booth, **Will Eisner** debuted the new expanded edition of his ground-breaking study *Comics and Sequential Art*. **Jen Van Meter**, writer for Oni's *The Blair Witch Project*, dropped by for a signing turned spooky when one fan brought along a backpack and a strange bundle of sticks...

art spiegelman

Friday began with a special panel bringing together CBLDF mainstays **Frank Miller**, **Neil Gaiman**, **Denis Kitchen**, and **Chris Oarr**. Each spoke about his own experiences with censorship and involvement in the Fund, as well as bringing attention to the recent *Elfquest* bust. Fans flocked to the CBLDF booth for signings by some of the industry's leading lights, including *Hate* creator **Peter Bagge**; **Tim Sale** and **Diana Schutz**, the creative team on the frightening *Grendel: Devil's Child;* and a rare appearance by *RAW* editor and *Maus* creator **art spiegelman**. The day wrapped up with another CBLDF Signing Party, this time hosted by **Neil Gaiman**. 100 lucky attendees of the morning panel had their dream come true at an event that allowed time for signing, sketches, and photos.

The stars were out in the daytime on Saturday, the busiest day of the show. **Frank Miller** signed at the **Dark Horse Comics** booth in a mammoth fund-raising event. Oarr and Dark Horse's Michael Martens once again kept spirits high for those waiting in one of the show's longest lines. The CBLDF booth hosted hugely successful signings by comics legend **Barry Windsor-Smith**, the Eisner-nominated *Whiteout* team of **Greg Rucka** and **Steve Lieber**, **Kurt Busiek**, **Will Eisner**, and *Black Hole* creator **Charles Burns**.

The con was also the site of the second **CBLDF Members' Reception**, once again hosted by **Frank Miller**. Sponsored by **Dark Horse**,

KURT BUSIEK HOLDS UP AN IMPROMPTU SKETCH BY PAUL SMITH

BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

REPORT

this was undoubtedly the show's swingingest scene. A who's who of the industry's finest mingled with CBLDF members across two luxury suites, from the tables of snacks to the balcony bar. Oarr led a toast to all the Fund supporters who had helped make this con the Fund's most successful ever, and then a few "Friend of the Fund" awards were given out to recognize some outstanding efforts. Neil Gaiman presented the award to Westhampton House publisher **Robert Boyd** for his work on *Gods & Tulips,* Miller bestowed a "Friend of the Fund" to **Mike Richardson** of Dark Horse, and Denis Kitchen honored Kulture Design's **Rex Edhlund** for all his work organizing the annual CBLDF Fundraising Party.

As the reception drew to a close, Gaiman mentioned that he'd be staying on to read a few new stories if anyone wanted to join him. He'd been forced to cancel one of his famous Midnight Readings the previous day, but this impromptu reading for CBLDF Members more than made up. In a small room next door, fans gathered for an intimate reading of new pieces and works in progress—things that are unlikely to be heard again until they're published. It's surprises like this that make CBLDF Members' Receptions such special events.

NEIL GAIMAN, DENIS KITCHEN, FRANK MILLER, AND CHRIS OARR AT COMIC-CON'S CBLDF PANEL

Not everyone stayed of course—the real party of the evening was still to come. The CBLDF **Boozathon/Fundraiser/Schmoozefest** has been the highlight of the con for seven years running. Sponsored by **Fantagraphics**, **Last Gasp**, **NBM Publishing**, and **ComicStore.com**, this unstoppable shindig has been organized with aplomb by **Rex Edhlund.** This year the party went legit with bartenders, bands, and the blessings of the fire marshal.

TIM SALE AND DIANA SCHUTZ

The partying slowed for a moment when **art spiegelman** took the stage to draw the winner in the Fund's week-long raffle. The prize? The hundred greatest comics of the century, according to *The Comics Journal.* Tickets were on sale during the show at the CBLDF and Fantagraphics booths, where would-be winners gazed longingly at the best works the medium has to offer. ***The Comics Journal*** sponsored the raffle, which raised more than $1,000 for the Fund.

But Comic-Con wasn't over yet! The Fund has Sunday signings with our own **Denis Kitchen**, **Ivan** "*Schizo*" **Brunetti**, and that *Weasel* **Dave Cooper**. Altogether, the Fund signed up more than 200 new members at the show, and raised an astonishing $23,500. This makes Comic-Con 1999 the largest single fund-raising event in CBLDF history. Thanks go out to everyone who made this achievement possible, including **Fae Desmond**, **David Glanzer**, **Hope Baby**, and **Charles Brownstein** of Comic-Con for all their help. And we couldn't have done it without our volunteers: Jeff Lorenz, Rich Marsalek, Adam "Gambit" Richards, Christy Cooper, Dan Robb, Shane Heckethorn, Sadie McFarlane, Maggie Maydell, and Marcia Allans.

The CBLDF wrapped up the summer season at **The Expo: SPX 99** in Bethesda, MD (September 17-19). The nation's premiere showcase for small press, alternative, and independent comics, SPX has always been a great show for the Fund. This year, SPX joined PACER (the Professional Association of Comics and Entertainment Retailers) and ICAF (the International Comics Art Festival) in throwing a four-day celebration of comics. CBLDF Legal Counsel **Burton Joseph** spoke to retailers at a special PACER panel, while ICAF brought together **Jeff Smith** and special guest **Neil Gaiman** for a discussion of storytelling.

Gaiman dropped by the booth on Saturday for a marathon signing, taking time to meet fans, draw a few sketches, and regale the huge line with stories and anecdotes. The Ignatz Awards, the Expo's festival prize, were bestowed that evening. Presenters included Gaiman, **Eddie Campbell**, **Bob Schreck**, while Top Shelf's **Chris Staros** m.c.'d the affair. Big winners included hot *Fireball* creator **Brian Ralph** and **Frank Cho.** Entertainment was provided by the Cambridge Comics Players and **James Kochalka**'s timeless a capella rendition of the *Batman* song.

SPX Sunday is the only holiday on the comics calendar: that day when all the fans emerge into a park for a day of sun and frolic. The Small Press vs. Diamond softball grudge match entertained the crowd despite Diamond's win. Pigs were roasted, beans baked, and a fine time was had by all.

The Expo:SPX 99 raised almost $9,000 for the Fund. A large portion of this comes straight from the gate—SPX is a benefit for the Fund, and proceeds from the show and the comic go to the CBLDF. Thanks go out to the show organizers and volunteers Marc Deering, Bill Lange, and DC's own Amie Brockway.

It was a banner season for the Fund at Wizard World, Comic-Con International, and The Expo. Watch this space for more detailed show low-downs, and keep tuned to **www.cbldf.org** for more con information.

LOOK FOR THE FUND AT A COMIC CON NEAR YOU!

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Mid-Ohio-Con, Columbus OH

FEBRUARY 5, 2000
A.P.E. VII, San Francisco CA

FEBRUARY 11-13, 2000
Katsucon 6, VA

FEBRUARY 25-27, 2000
Fantasm 2K, Greenville NC

MARCH 23-26, 2000
AggieCon, Texas A&M University

MARCH 31-APRIL 2, 2000
Megacon, Orlando FL

MARCH 31-APRIL 2, 2000
ICON, Stonybrook NY

APRIL 6-9, 2000
Wondercon, San Francisco CA

APRIL 9-16, 2000
Making Waves: The CBLDF Cruise, on the High Seas!

APRIL 28-30, 2000
Pittsburgh Comicon, Pittsburgh PA

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE SHOWS, CHECK OUT THE CBLDF CONVENTION GUIDE AT
www.cbldf.org
OR CALL US AT
1-800-99-CBLDF

Mid-Ohio-Con

If you haven't been already, do yourself a favor and visit **Mid-Ohio Con** in Columbus (November 26-28). This is one of our favorite shows, with a relaxed, fraternal atmosphere and an always-interesting slate of guests. This year's Guest of Honor is 1998 Defender of Liberty Award winner **Harlan Ellison**, who will be leading the show's annual charity auction. Special thanks go to **Daryl Banks** and **Brian Kane** who have produced a stunning Green Lantern portrait for this year's program book that will also be available as a special limited-edition print at the CBLDF booth. To find out more about this year's events, check the show's website at **www.midohiocon.com.**

CBLDF JOINS ELLISON, GAIMAN IN SUIT AGAINST VIRGINIA

On October 6th, 1999 the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund joined fifteen other First Amendment groups, trade associations, and authors in a suit seeking to block enforcement of a new Virginia law that would criminalize all material on the Internet deemed "harmful to minors." Among the Fund's fellow plaintiffs are **People for the American Way**, the **American Booksellers' Foundation for Free Expression**, the **Freedom to Read Foundation**, the **Virginia Internet Service Providers Alliance**, and Defender of Liberty award-winning authors **Harlan Ellison** and **Neil Gaiman**. The wide array of plaintiffs in this suit are united in their belief that the Internet—the freest, most far-reaching marketplace of ideas the world has ever known—cannot be held hostage to the political tides of Richmond or any other state capital.

The Virginia General Assembly passed the law on April 7, 1999 over the objections of Governor Gilmore, and it took effect on July 1. The law criminalizes the "knowing display" on the Internet of material deemed "harmful to juveniles" if the display is "for [a] commercial purpose [and] in a manner whereby juveniles may examine or peruse" the materials. The law's broad definition of "knowing" and vagueness about what constitutes "commercial purpose" make it a minefield for businesses as well as for artists on the Internet.

The CBLDF has significant experience with the misapplication of "harmful to minors" statutes. Despite the fact that seventy-five percent of the comics sold in the United States are purchased and read by adults, the notion that comics are inherently "kid stuff" has brought us into conflict with the censors time and time again. The past two decades have brought unprecedented diversity to the field, so that adult themes and situations are now as common in comics as in film, novels, or any other media. There is no doubt that laws such as Virginia's pose a threat to the comic book industry.

The comics community has a huge stake in the Internet, both as a vehicle for marketing comic books and, increasingly, as a medium for creating and displaying comics. One effect of laws like the recently-enacted Virginia statute would be to turn back the clock on comics content twenty years or more, because only the most childish themes and situations can be safely assumed not to be "harmful to minors." The CBLDF joined this suit because we cannot allow comics' future on the Internet to be so constrained. Harlan Ellison and Neil Gaiman agreed to stand with us in order to underscore the importance of a free Internet to creators as well as their readers.

To date, two federal laws and three state laws that have sought to criminalize certain content on the Internet have been struck down by the courts, and the Supreme Court has held that the Internet deserves the highest First Amendment protection. Our lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court in Alexandria, claims that Virginia's new law violates the First Amendment and the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

The counsel for the plaintiffs are **Wiley, Rein, and Fielding**, who are serving pro bono, the People for the American Way Foundation, and **Sonnenschein, Nath, and Rosenthal**, general counsel for the **Media Coalition.** The plaintiffs include: the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression; **BiblioBytes**; author **Susie Bright**; the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund; the **Commercial Internet Exchange Association** (CIX); **A Different Light Bookstores**; Harlan Ellison; **Chris Filkins** of the **Safer Sex Institute**; the Freedom to Read Foundation; **Lambda Rising Bookstores**; People for the American Way; the **Periodical and Book Association of America, Inc.**; **PSINet Inc.**; **Rockbridge Global Village**; **Sexual Health Network**; and the **Virginia Internet Service Providers Alliance** (VISPA). To follow this case further, please visit our web-site at **www.cbldf.org.**

Art © 1998 by Sergio Aragones

ELFQUEST BUSTED! *(continued from page 3)*

Virginia's definition of what is obscene to minors, which explicitly requires exposed genitalia. Recognizing this, the district attorney did not object to the defense counsel's motion to dismiss the charge. The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund paid the attorney's retainer and all other legal fees associated with the case.

Ultimately, the *Elfquest* bust isn't about an obscene or even a salacious comic book. It's about a long-standing feud between the grandfather who filed the charges and the defendant. The grandfather's grudge goes back more than eight years, to a time when his daughter was romantically involved with the defendant. In fact, they had a child together— a boy who, eight years later, purchased an "obscene" comic for a quarter from his biological father.

The charge of obscenity was just another weapon in this on-going feud, close at hand, easy to use, and potentially very damaging. Such accusations can be leveled from safe distances, and personal motivations can be concealed under concerns for what may be harmful to minors. All too often, those who target comic books—cultural extremists, over-eager district attorneys, or grudge-bearing grandfathers—are doing so in order to further their own private agendas.

CBLDF T-Shirts are a $20 donation and 100% cotton. SIZES L, XL, AND XXL.

FRANK MILLER "SPLASH" SHIRT

Who wouldn't go to ***Hell and Back*** for ***Sin City***'s latest starlet? It's Miller's sexiest image ever—small enough to be subtle, hot enough to be provocative! Available in sinful colors to match every mood: **Blood Red**, **Snow White**, and **Gold Digger**. Please specify size and color.

THE EIGHTH DEADLY SIN SHIRT

Linda Medley, creator of ***Castle Waiting***, makes a powerful statement about the evils of censorship with this spooky book-burning scene. Blood red art on black tee.

JOSEPH LINSNER SHIRT

How many licks does it take to prove that "Censorship Sucks"? **Joseph Michael Linsner** (***Dawn***) is renowned for his paintings of beautiful women, and this provocative lass is no exception! Full-color artwork on white tee.

MORE CBLDF T-SHIRTS!

visit **www.cbldf.org** or previous issues to view these fabulous shirts.

FRANK MILLER: **Frank Miller**'s striking work speaks for itself and so should you! A chilling reminder of how censorship ties us all down. Full-color art on black tee.

STRANGERS IN PARADISE: **Terry Moore** evokes Blind Justice as a damsel in distress as the Constitution burns. Full-color art on black tee.

MILK & CHEESE: **"The MAN Can't Bust Our Comics!"** proclaim **Milk & Cheese**, dairy products gone bad. **Evan Dorkin**'s caustic creations adorn this white tee in full confrontational color by **Sarah Dyer**.

NEIL GAIMAN'S GUARDIAN ANGEL TOUR SHIRT

The official shirt for **Neil Gaiman**'s **1999 Guardian Angel Tour**, featuring full-color art by **Michael Wm. Kaluta** and all the tour dates on the back. Black tee (of course), available in **Medium**, Large, X-Large, and XX-Large.

INDEPENDENT VOICES #2:

Featuring a cover by **Joseph Michael Linsner**, this new 48-page benefit book is bursting at the seams with fresh talent! Check out page 11 for all the details. Published by Peregrine Entertainment. $3 donation.

SANDMAN: THE DREAMHUNTERS

Neil Gaiman returns to ***Sandman*** with a new tale beautifully illustrated in water-color by Japanese artist **Amano**. A must for Gaiman fans, this deluxe hardcover edition is limited to only 500 numbered copies. $50 donation.

SIGNED BY GAIMAN & AMANO!

FRANK MILLER HEAVY METAL VARIANT COVER

Frank Miller provides the front *and* back covers of this collectible CBLDF Benefit edition of *Heavy Metal*. Inside, you'll find the mag's trademark mix of sci-fi and fantasy, plus an exclusive interview with Miller! $10 donation.

SIN CITY "MARV" PRINT:

Produced in France, this rare ***Sin City*** print has never before been available in the States. **Frank Miller** donated his stock to the Fund. Measures 16" by 20", limited to 250 numbered copies. $25 donation.

MORE CBLDF BOOKS & COMICS!

BATMAN MASTERPIECES: This deluxe hardcover offers a fully-painted tour of Gotham and its darker denizens as the Joker seeks to uncover who killed the Batman! See page 11 for more about the special benefit project. $40 donation.

GODS & TULIPS: **Neil Gaiman** offers an insider's look at comics in this collection of speeches and essays, featuring a macabre cover painting by **Michael Wm. Kaluta** and illustrations by **Chester Brown**. Published by Westhampton House. $3 donation.

MURDER BY CROWQUILL: This 200 page book delivers 20 spine-tingling tales as comics' most innovative creators take a stab at mystery! **Tim Truman**, **Joe Lansdale**, and more contribute to this Amazing Montage collection. $10 donation.

AVAILABLE BY MAIL OR ONLINE @ www.cbldf.org

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We've already **shattered** our 1999 goal for the Member Campaign, but now is no time to be complacent! With your help, the CBLDF can bring its member rolls up to **5,000** members by the end of 2000. If you haven't already, please consider joining the Fund.

There's **strength** in numbers.

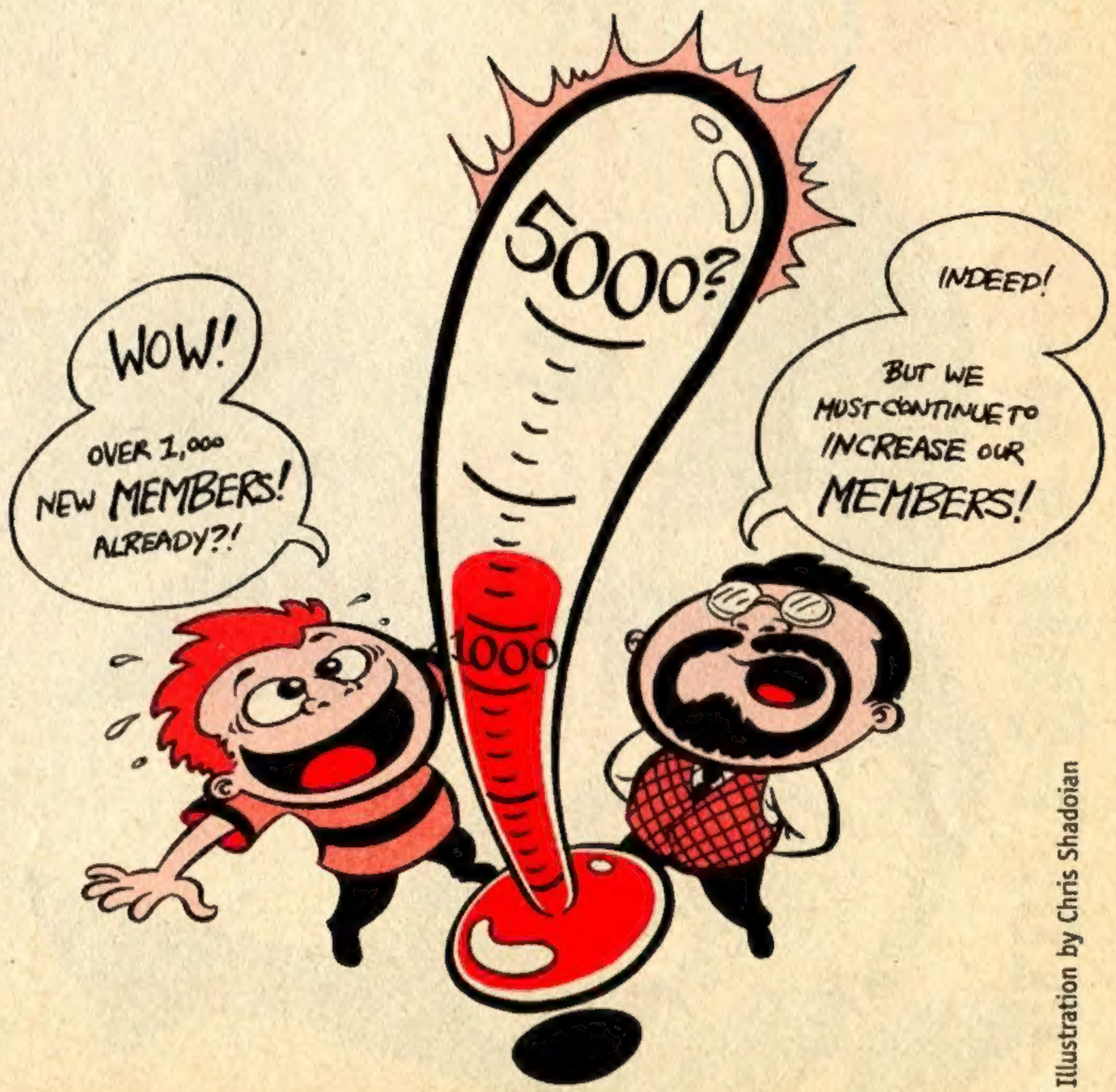

Illustration by Chris Shadoian

An Ev

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